Student Development and Identity Exploration

(summaries from background materials on course website)

CTL 100

http://www.stanford.edu/~davies/ctl100-syllabus.html

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The student development perspective on student affairs

- My version: College is about students taking responsibility for their own learning (learning how to learn/develop on their own), in an environment designed to help them do this both in and out of the classroom

- Differs from
  - Character development model
  - Student services model
  - Business contract model

How shall we call college students?

- "Late adolescents" (G. Stanley Hall, 1904; Erik Erikson, 1959)
  - viewed college aged students as in the later stages of a struggle between "identity vs. role diffusion"
- "Early adults" (Daniel Levinson, 1978;1986)
  - college students are in the "novice phase" transitioning to adulthood
- "Emerging adults" (Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, 2000)
  - college students are in a distinct phase that is neither adolescence nor young adulthood

Characteristics of emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000)

- Ages 18-25+
- Distinct demographically - high degree of variation in living arrangements, instability
- Distinct subjectively - do not see themselves as adolescents or adults
- Distinct for identity explorations - the period of life offering "the most opportunity for identity explorations in... love, work, and worldviews"
- Associated with high rates of risky behavior

An influential theory of student development: Arthur W. Chickering (1969)

[excerpted from Student Services: A Handbook for the Profession, 3rd Ed., 1996, pp. 168-169]

1. **Developing Competence**-focuses on tasks of developing intellectual, physical and manual, and interpersonal competence.

2. **Managing Emotions**-students develop the ability to recognize and accept emotions, and appropriately express and control them.

3. **Moving Through Autonomy Toward Interdependence**-students develop increased emotional independence, self-direction, problem-solving ability, persistence, and mobility.

4. **Developing Mature Interpersonal Relationships**-acceptance and appreciation of differences, and capacity for healthy and lasting intimate relationships.

Chickering (1969) continued...

5. **Establishing Identity**-issues of comfort with body and appearance, gender & sexual orientation, sense of one's role and lifestyle, sense of social & cultural heritage, comfort with one's roles and lifestyles, secure self in light of feedback from significant others, self-acceptance, self-esteem, personal stability & integration.

6. **Developing Purpose**-clear vocational goals, making meaningful commitments to specific personal interests & activities.

7. **Developing Integrity**- progressing from rigid, moralistic thinking to a more humanized, personalized value system that respects the beliefs of others.

Other perspectives on student identity

[From Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991, pp. 28-30; and N.J. Evans et al., 2009, chapter 1]

- William Perry's stages (1968): dualism modified, relativism discovered, commitments in relativism developed

- Robert Kegan (1982) and Baxter Magolda (1999): self-authorship - from external to internal identity formation

- Social identity - defined by group membership and relative privilege and domination

"The Millennial College Generation" (Howe and Strauss, 2000)

[From M. Walker, "Working with College Students & Student Development Theory Primer", 2008]

1. Special - many from smaller families with fewer siblings to compete with, so received greater attention and increased security from mom and dad (known as "helicopter parents" due to their constant hovering around their children).

2. Sheltered - more than previous generations, parents kept them closer to home with a focus on safety and connection to family, but also involved with many organized activities and sports.

3. Confident - increased parental involvement and coaching/external adult involvement gave them lots of support and self confidence.

"The Millennial College Generation" (Howe and Strauss, 2000) - continued

4. Team oriented - grew up among most diverse American population ever, and learned to be civil and less "me oriented" than previous generations. Learned early on to "play nice and share".

5. Conventional - more resourceful, dynamic, and environmentally conscious than previous generations.

6. Pressured - overscheduled, over mentored, and driven to succeed among peers, in part due to increased pressure to attend college (or in many cases exceptional colleges) in order to succeed in life.

7. High achieving - future oriented, planners, focus on long term success.